1	REPORTER'S RECORD
2	VOLUME 3 OF 3 VOLUMES
3	COURT OF APPEALS NO 14-22-00694-CV
4	TRIAL COURT CAUSE NO 22-CCV-070378
5	
6	RICHARD P. JONES &) IN THE COUNTY COURT
7	MICHAEL JOSEPH BITGOOD AKA MICHAEL EASTON)
8	Plaintiff,)
9	VS) OF LAW NUMBER THREE (3)
10	MARIANNA SULLIVAN,)
11	IMPERIAL LOFTS LLC, AND KARINA MARTINEZ)
12	Defendant(s).) FORT BEND COUNTY, TEXAS
13	*****************
14	
15	MOTIONS HEARING
16	
17	******************
18	On the 13th day of September, 2022, the foregoing
19	proceedings came on to be heard outside the presence of a
20	Jury, in the above-entitled and enumerated cause; and the
21	following proceedings were held before the Honorable Lewis
22	White, Presiding Associate Judge of County Court #3, Fort
23	Bend County, Texas: Proceedings reported by Oral
24	Stenography; Reporter's Record produced BY COMPUTER-ASSISTED
25	TRANSCRIPTION.

1	APPEARANCES
2	
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4	- AND -
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9	- AND -
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14	******
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18	ATTORNEY FOR THE DEFENDANT(S)
19	
20	
21	
22	
23	
24	
25	

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1 SEPTEMBER 13, 2022 2 PROCEEDINGS 3 4 THE COURT: Let's go on the record. Okay, 5 before we get started what we are going to do is we are 6 going to start off with the Rule 12, okay. And then, we are 7 going to do the Motion to Compel SLAPP, okay. And then, we 8 are going to discuss the Discovery Issue. And then, at the 9 end, the Docket Control Order. Is everybody on the same 10 page? 11 MR. OUBRE: Yes, Your Honor. 12 THE COURT: Okay. And this all determines if 13 we get there but we got to go in order, okay. That is the 14 order that we are going to go in and I understand you all 15 have -- you also have an agreement for the jury trial date 16 if we need one. 17 MR. BITGOOD: No, Your Honor. 18 THE COURT: No, Mr. Easton, you don't have to 19 get up. 20 MR. BITGOOD: Okay, the order was if the 21 Court grants our relief today then the only thing left to do 2.2 would be to Move to Damages. So we have a November 10th at 23 1:30 in the afternoon, if we don't settle at mediation. 24 Mr. Oubre and I have agreed to voluntarily go to mediation 25 October the 4th.

1	MR. OUBRE: Well, Your Honor, I've got an
2	adjuster who is out on leave and as soon as he gets back I
3	will be able to confirm mediation dates. So it might not be
4	on the 4th but I am hoping to get it settled sometime in
5	October.
6	THE COURT: Okay. So we don't have a trial
7	date?
8	MR. OUBRE: No.
9	MR. BITGOOD: No.
10	THE COURT: Okay.
11	MR. OUBRE: And, Your Honor, for the Docket
12	Control Order do we submit an agreed DCO or do you just pick
13	a trial
14	THE COURT: I would love for you to submit an
15	Agreed Docket Control Order. If you don't have an Agreed
16	both sides can submit one and I will make a decision.
17	MR. OUBRE: Okay.
18	THE COURT: Okay.
19	MS. NORMAN: Your Honor, I am here on be I
20	am Susan Norman.
21	THE COURT: Okay.
22	MS. NORMAN: And I am here on behalf of
23	Dickie Richard P. Jones and Lewis Brisbois Bisgaard & Smith
24	LLP, The Domestic Texas Partnership, who is the Plaintiff in
25	this case.

1	THE COURT: And you are representing who
2	again? Can you say it again, Ms. Norman?
3	MS. NORMAN: I'm sorry, Your Honor, what?
4	THE COURT: Who are you representing?
5	MS. NORMAN: I represent Richard P. Jones and
6	Lewis Bisgaard Lewis Brisbois Bisgaard & Smith, The Texas
7	Texas Domestic LLP, Limited Liability Partnership, who is
8	the Plaintiff in this case.
9	THE COURT: Okay.
10	MS. NORMAN: And, Your Honor, one more thing.
11	I have litigated with Mr. Easton for 18 years and during
12	that time in front of the Judge's with whom we have
13	litigated for our respective parties and I have found
14	that many times we are making the same argument and using
15	the same exhibits. And under Fibreboard v. Pool, attorneys
16	are encouraged to adopt other correct arguments and exhibits
17	and I would like the Court's permission today to if that
18	is the case with Mr. Bitgood to adopt his arguments if
19	those come up as the same as mine.
20	THE COURT: No objections?
21	MS. NORMAN: Thank you, Your Honor.
22	MR. OUBRE: No.
23	THE COURT: Okay, we are going to proceed.
24	The Court calls cause number 22-CCV-070378;
25	Richard P. Jones, Michael Joseph Bitgood AKA Michael Easton

```
and Lewis Brisois Bisgaard & Smith LLP vs. Karina Martinez,
 1
 2
    Marianna Sullivan, Imperial Lofts LLC.
 3
                    And as I stated earlier, we are going to
 4
     start with the Rule 12.
 5
                    MR. OUBRE: Your Honor, do you prefer if we
 6
     stand or sit?
 7
                    THE COURT: That is totally up to you.
 8
     aware of Mr. Easton's situations so I prefer he doesn't --
 9
    have to -- he doesn't stand. I prefer he doesn't stand.
10
                    MR. BITGOOD: Every so often I can.
11
                    THE COURT: Okay, well I'd prefer it if you
12
     don't.
13
                    MR. BITGOOD: Okay, well your preference is
14
    my selection.
15
                    THE COURT: So I am not going to make
16
     everybody -- anybody else stand but if you would like to
17
     stand that is fine as well, okay.
18
                    MS. NORMAN: Your Honor, we are also here --
19
     the total list of Defendant's in this case is: Imperial
20
     lofts LLC, Imperial Lofts Owner, David Oubre, Karina
21
    Martinez --
22
                    THE COURT: That -- we are not there yet, Ms.
23
            When we get there I will let you know. Because
24
     they are not necessarily Defendant's until we rule on that.
25
                    THE REPORTER:
                                   Judge.
```

1	MR. BITGOOD: Your Honor, I miss what you
2	said.
3	THE REPORTER: I need a couple of minutes to
4	restart my computer.
5	THE COURT: Go ahead.
6	(BREAK TAKEN)
7	THE COURT: Okay. Ms. Norman, what I was
8	stating earlier is that I have several motions that were
9	filed this morning regarding, this morning or last night,
10	regarding whether to strike Mr. Oubre and someone else
11	which I haven't had a chance to read as far as parties to
12	this suit. This was filed yesterday.
13	MR. BITGOOD: Your Honor, we are not aware of
14	any Motion to Strike
15	MS. NORMAN: We haven't seen
16	MR. BITGOOD: we haven't received a copy
17	of it. We don't know what you
18	THE COURT: Okay. Well, maybe I mean, can
19	somebody take this up? I just got this today.
20	(Bailiff complies)
21	MR. BITGOOD: Okay. We know about this. We
22	know about this exhibit. We know about this.
23	MR. OUBRE: Oh, Your Honor, those
24	MR. BITGOOD: There is not a motion, Judge.
25	MR. OUBRE: are supplements that were

1	filed last week.
2	THE COURT: Okay, so they are supplements
3	MR. OUBRE: I think we sent both parties
4	sent copies in for the Court in case the documents didn't
5	hit the system.
6	MR. BITGOOD: Yeah, we are good.
7	THE COURT: Okay.
8	MR. BITGOOD: None of them are requesting a
9	strike, that is what scared me.
10	THE COURT: Okay. I just got all that
11	MR. BITGOOD: Understood. And again, Your
12	Honor, I can remain seated when I address the Court.
13	THE COURT: You can remain seated when you
14	address the Court.
15	MR. BITGOOD: Thank you. What concerned me
16	is you said a Motion to Strike there is no Motion to Strike
17	here. Ah! There is, it is buried in there.
18	THE COURT: Yes.
19	MR. BITGOOD: Got it.
20	THE COURT: So you guys are saying that, that
21	is a previous motion?
22	MR. BITGOOD: Excuse me, Your Honor?
23	THE COURT: You guys are saying that these
24	new motions that I received this morning are
25	MR. BITGOOD: Yes, we have copies of them.

```
1
                    THE COURT: -- a part of the previous motions
 2
     that have already been filed?
 3
                    MR. BITGOOD: He claims --
 4
                    MR. OUBRE: Yeah, Your Honor, those are
 5
     supplements to the previous responses.
 6
                    THE COURT:
                               Okay. So I don't need to
 7
     consider anything that is in these motions that have been
 8
     filed yesterday?
 9
                    MR. OUBRE: No, Your Honor.
                                                 Those are --
10
     those are supplements. Both of the parties sent in
11
     supplements and responses and they were emailed to the clerk
12
     just so that Your Honor would have them because we weren't
13
     sure if it would get through the electronic system in time.
14
                    MR. BEERS: If I can add to that, Judge?
15
                    THE COURT: Yes.
16
                    MR. BEERS: Two of the items in that packet
17
     that you have were filed yesterday. One of them is in
18
     Exhibit 2A that I filed, which is an updated attorneys fee
19
     affidavit updated from two weeks ago when we were here. And
20
     then, one of the things is a proposed order on the SLAPP
21
    Motion that was updated from the one that I filed two weeks
2.2
     ago. So there are two things in there that were actually
23
     filed yesterday. I don't know if they have been accepted
24
     yet or not but they were filed yesterday.
25
                                They were accepted this morning.
                    THE COURT:
```

MR. BITGOOD: Your Honor, if I may point out
one thing in that Prayer for Relief, he is not asking for
the relief of striking the pleading. So you can call it
anything you want at the State Bar v Heard, you can call it
a deed of trust, it is what you ask for in your Prayer for
Relief that controls and puts me on notice as to what you
really want. If you look at the Prayer for Relief nowhere
does he ask for the Court to strike the pleading. What he
asks is that he not be disqualified and disqualification is
not on the table today. You asked him last time, do you
know what a Rule 12 is and he said he did. That is what we
are going on first as per the Court's instructions.
THE COURT: That is why I wanted to make sure
that we are all on the same page. And that is why
MR. BITGOOD: We are now.
THE COURT: Are we going to everybody has
to understand where I am coming from.
MR. OUBRE: And so, there is no argument that
we should be disqualified today it is simply under Rule 12,
Motion to Show Authority.
MR. BITGOOD: That
THE COURT: That is my understanding that's
what I thought we were going on today.
MR. BITGOOD: That is correct.
THE COURT: When I spoke earlier I was saying

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-- that was what I was talking about when I was telling you
 1
 2
     you are not there yet. I have not read your supplement at
 3
     all, okay, because I just received them about ten minutes
 4
    before we started Court.
 5
                    MR. BITGOOD: Your Honor, you are correct.
 6
                    Disqualification and Rule 12 are two
 7
     different sets of animals. They both have different
 8
     remedies so disqualification is not set today. But because
 9
     of the allegations made in those pleadings -- which are live
10
    pleadings -- they will be relevant to everything that takes
11
     place today. So those are called judicial admissions. But
12
     no, disqualification is not on the table. The only thing
13
     set today according to the docket is the Rule 12 Motion, the
14
     SLAPP Motion and then his Motions if he survives 12 and the
15
     SLAPP. So on that, we all agree.
16
                    THE COURT: Okay. We will hear 12 -- in this
17
     order: Rule 12, Motion to Compel and then we will hear the
18
     SLAPP Motion.
19
                    MR. BEERS: I think the SLAPP would follow
20
     the Rule 12 if we are still going after that, Judge.
21
                    THE COURT: Okay, we can do that.
22
                    MR. BEERS: I am not going to arm wrestle you
23
    but that is what I believe, Judge.
24
                    THE COURT: Okay. Let's start with the Rule
25
     12.
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1 Mr. Oubre, you may proceed. 2 MR. BITGOOD: Excuse me, it is my motion but 3 I need to make an announcement. 4 Your Honor, the 682 rules in the Texas Rules 5 of Civil Procedure -- you pegged it correctly, there is only 6 one that shifts the burden. It is Rule 12. 7 The burden is on you, David. 8 MR. OUBRE: Okay. 9 Your Honor, the Plaintiff's have alleged that 10 we do not have authority to represent our clients. I have 11 attached the affidavits from all of my clients indicating 12 that I and the law firm of Lewis Brisbois Bisgaard & Smith 13 have authority to represent them in this case. 14 attached the affidavit from Thomas Larson, who is General 15 Counsel for NRES Holdings, his job duty includes the 16 management of legal matters for Imperial Lofts including 17 retention of Counsel's and he indicates that I have 18 authority to represent Imperial Lofts. I filed an 19 additional affidavit from Mr. Larson indicating -- even 20 though it wasn't alleged in the motion that the additional 21 Defendant who was added -- that I have the authority to 2.2 represent that Defendant which was Imperial Lofts Owner, 23 LLC. I have also attached the affidavits from Ms. Sullivan 24 -- Ms. Sullivan and Karina Martinez which indicate that I 25 have the authority to represent them in this lawsuit.

1	THE COURT: Mr. Easton, your response?
2	MR. BITGOOD: Response? Your Honor, I have
3	one question. Does he rest on his presentation?
4	THE COURT: I
5	MR. OUBRE: Yes.
6	MR. BITGOOD: He rests. Okay, he said yes.
7	Judge, first of all, the affidavits are not
8	before the Court because they have not been adopted and
9	incorporated by reference. Take the case up to him, Susan.
10	MS. NORMAN: May I approach?
11	MR. BITGOOD: He has to do that. It is
12	fundamental, without that you can't even look at those
13	affidavits. Number two, the affidavits are hearsay. And
14	number three, the case law is legent. He's got to put on
15	evidence before he rests. Do you want the cases? I got
16	them here for you.
17	MR. OUBRE: Your Honor, in response to that
18	
19	MR. BITGOOD: No, you rested.
20	MR. OUBRE: Well
21	THE COURT: You can respond to that part of
22	it.
23	MR. BITGOOD: Okay.
24	MR. OUBRE: Your Honor, in the Second Amended
25	Response to Plaintiff's Motion to Show Authority filed

```
7/21/2022 it says, "See Exhibits A-C, incorporated herein
 1
 2
     and Lewis Brisbois and Exhibits D-F, incorporated herein and
 3
     attached." Those -- so those are showing that, that is
 4
     incorporated. So I don't know what he is talking about when
 5
     he says, "See Exhibits A-C, incorporated herein and
 6
     attached."
 7
                    MR. BITGOOD: I'm -- may I respond?
 8
                    THE COURT: You may respond, Mr. Easton.
 9
                    MR. BITGOOD: On September 7th, which was the
10
     last live pleading, he submitted 6 affidavits -- or he
11
     thought he was submitting 6 affidavits -- none them are
12
     incorporated by reference into his live pleading.
13
     Therefore, they are not even before the Court. So the Court
14
     can't even look at them for examination or sufficiency --
15
     that preserves our objection. But all of that --
16
     notwithstanding, he made a stipulation that he was not going
17
     to bring his clients to court. When he made that
18
     stipulation I prepared, according to the Bear Opinion and
19
     also Phillips v Phillips -- he has to put on evidence, live
20
     testimonial evidence. He has already stipulated he is not
21
     going to do that. This part of it is over.
2.2
                    MS. NORMAN: May I further --
23
                    MR. BITGOOD: And he rested.
24
                    MS. NORMAN: May I further respond, Your
25
     Honor?
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Under Harrison v Baer an Amended Pleading completely supplants a prior pleading. So his Amended --Second Amended has been supplanted by his Third Amended, which does not contain attachment and incorporation. MR. OUBRE: Your Honor, in the Second Amended Response to the Motion to Show Authority I attached affidavits from my clients indicating that I have authority to represent them in this matter. The supplements that they are talking about -- there was a Second Supplemental Response and the affidavits were attached to the Supplemental Response and filed with the Court. Several of them are the same affidavits that were previously filed but I did not file an Amended Response. It says, "Second Supplemental Response to Plaintiff's Motion to Show Authority." It is not an Amended Response. MR. BITGOOD: But, Your Honor, in any event his failure to put on evidence -- live testimonial evidence is fatal. I cite the case in Re B-A-A-R. MS. NORMAN: B-E-A-R. MR. BITGOOD: It is part of the Lexis 5889. Did you take him the case law? MS. NORMAN: No. MR. BITGOOD: And this was the key holding in It said he -- there was no testimony. record shows Turner's statements were not evidence, no

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witnesses were called and no offer of proof was made,
     because he failed to carry his burden, the Court had no
     discretion and had to sustain the Rule 12 Motion.
                    He rested his case and didn't call any
     witnesses, there is no getting around that.
                    MR. OUBRE: Your Honor, I might add that this
     Supplemental Response -- not Amended Response but the Second
 8
     Supplemental Response -- says Defendant's have attached the
     affidavits of Karina Martinez, Marianna Sullivan and Tom
10
     Larson as Exhibits A, B, C and D. These affidavits have
11
     already been attached on several pleadings in a Response
12
     that was filed -- an Amended Response that was filed -- a
13
     Supplemental Response that was filed and they are before the
14
     Court. He is asking the Court to ignore affidavits which
15
     are testimony and which are evidence that I have authority
16
     to represent my clients in this matter.
17
                    MR. BITGOOD: Your Honor.
                    MR. OUBRE: And I can read the testimony.
19
     The affidavits --
20
                    MR. BITGOOD: No.
                    MR. OUBRE: -- of Karina Martinez, they are
2.2
    before the Court. And she -- they indicate that both me and
23
    my firm located at 24 Greenway Plaza have authority to
24
     represent them in this lawsuit.
25
                                 Your Honor, I need to object,
                    MR. BITGOOD:
```

1	please. He rested.
2	THE COURT: What is your legal objection, Mr.
3	Bitgood?
4	MR. BITGOOD: Objection, he has rested his
5	case. He cannot produce new evidence. He rested.
6	THE COURT: The objection will be sustained.
7	MR. OUBRE: So, Your Honor, you
8	THE COURT: The
9	MS. NORMAN: Your Honor, may I ask the deputy
10	to hand you this?
11	THE COURT: Okay. Do either parties have the
12	San Antonio v. Aguilar case?
13	MR. BITGOOD: Which case?
14	THE COURT: San Antonio v. Aguilar.
15	(No response)
16	THE COURT: Okay. Neither party has it,
17	right? You don't have it either?
18	MS. NORMAN: No, sir.
19	THE COURT: Okay, give me let me take a 5
20	minute break.
21	(Break taken)
22	THE COURT: Let's go back on the record.
23	Mr. Easton, you may proceed.
24	MR. BITGOOD: Under the case I knew I had
25	him back on March 11th, like I told him, under the case of

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In re Salazar cited at 315 S.W.2d 279; when he represents a corporation, Your Honor, he could only represent the corporation. He can't represent any officers, he cannot represent any employees, he cannot represent anybody else. That is Texas law. While he might've gotten away today, okay, with representing the LLC's he cannot represent individuals. He just can't. That is the law in Texas. So I told him I had him then on March the 11th.

And the third thing I had him on is that he didn't have a certificate to do business in Texas on March the 11th. When he filed his original pleading their certificate to do business was expired, failing to renew it and filing a pleading makes the pleading void. And on top of that, it also constitutes a misdemeanor. I don't want to accuse my friend of a crime, but inadvertently he may have committed it and you can't be party to that. Under 71.012 of the Texas Business and Commerce Code; he must, must -- he is a foreign corporation -- with no grace period have a certificate on file with the Secretary of State before he files a document in a Texas court. He did not do that. He did not even apply until March the 28th. Therefore, every pleading he filed is Void Initio on top of the fact that he cannot represent individuals if he represents the corporation. Would the Court like a copy of the Salazar case?

1	THE COURT: Yes, please.
2	MR. BITGOOD: Susan.
3	THE COURT: Sir, you may respond.
4	MR. OUBRE: Your Honor, we filed the
5	application on March 28th that was accepted by the
6	Secretary of State that doesn't disqualify us as
7	attorneys from representing a party and filing an answer.
8	Second, we have filed Amended Answers and so it is just a
9	Moot point.
10	THE COURT: You filed an Answer as a
11	corporation, as a firm or as an individual?
12	MR. OUBRE: I filed it as David Oubre under
13	law firm of Lewis Brisbois Bisgaard Smith.
14	MR. BITGOOD: In answer to the Courts
15	question, Your Honor, on March 11th the block said Lewis
16	Brisbois Bisgaard, LLP by David Oubre. So no, he filed it
17	in the name of that firm and they did not have authority to
18	appear in a Texas court.
19	MR. OUBRE: Your Honor, I have authority as
20	an attorney licensed in the state of Texas to appear in the
21	Texas court.
22	MR. BITGOOD: Understood.
23	MR. OUBRE: There are things that a
24	partnership or a corporation can or cannot do or may be
25	fined for doing but that has no bearing on an Answer filed

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1
     by an attorney who has filed Amended Answers on behalf of
     all the Defendant's.
 2
 3
                    MR. BITGOOD: There you go, he just said it.
 4
                    Now --
 5
                    MR. OUBRE: I represent both Imperial
 6
     entities, Karina and --
 7
                    THE COURT: Let him finish. Then, you can
 8
     respond.
                    MR. OUBRE: Okay.
 9
10
                    THE COURT: Go ahead.
11
                    MR. BITGOOD: Me?
12
                    MR. OUBRE: I -- well, I have filed Amended
13
     Answers on behalf of the two Imperial Loft entities, Ms.
14
     Sullivan and Ms. Martinez. But regardless, there is no
15
     exclusion of an Answer or me not being able to represent
16
     parties as a licensed attorney in the state of Texas.
17
     Subsequently, we did file the application which was accepted
18
     by the Secretary of State.
19
                    THE COURT: Mr. Bitgood, you can respond.
20
                    MR. BITGOOD: Thank you, Your Honor.
                    I don't disagree that a lawyer has authority
21
2.2
     to represent clients in a Texas court but if a lawyer signs
23
     a pleading on behalf of a company that cannot appear in a
24
     Texas court -- just like a tax franchise and
25
     franchisement -- the pleading is void, 71.012 of the Texas
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Business and Commerce Code is clear. In addition, under Texas Rule of Discipline for Lawyers 109; a lawyer employed by an organization represents the entity and the entity only. He cannot represent Karina Martinez, who is adverse to him now, Mariana Sullivan and the corporations. He can't do that, Texas law forbids it. So I had him there too. I just don't want you to go pull a case and then you say, you pulled the rabbits out of your hat and made me go through all that work -- either way he is out. And 1.12 is organization of a client he signed on and that is, you know -- early on, Your Honor, I had asked him to please furnish me with his contract of employment and he won't do it. Neither will he furnish me with the declaration page from his insurance policy, which the Texas Supreme Court says he should have done that six months ago. He said it in front of me the other day he was going to do it, he is yet to keep his word there. But more importantly than all of that, I bet you if the Court was to Compel the Contract what the contract would show -- it would show they hired Lewis Brisbois Bisgaard & Smith, LLP, not him.

Now, if you want to settle the issue once and for all, have the Court order and compel him to produce his contract In Camera for the Court and I'm telling you, that is what it is going to say. Because this is an insurance company and when it comes to insurance companies I am

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The first letter I sent him cited a case called Tilley v. Employers Insurance it is a 1963 case and the Texas Supreme Court -- 73' case, I'm sorry -- set down the standard by which when an insurance company hires a law firm the client remains the only client, they can have nobody else. I know that law. I sent them a letter dated March 14th -- Counsel, watch where you are walking, you are walking into a bad position here but it kept on and on and on -- oh, I don't know what you are talking about, I don't know what you are trying to do -- okay, it is not my job to do his job. Remember, I am the one without the law bar card. He is the one with the bar card, been doing it for 29 years. The fact that he didn't take me serious now comes home to roost. But he cannot do that because the law cannot allow him and the Court's cannot allow a lawyer to dip below a standard. The disciplinary rules are mandatory on all of us and he can't -- the Court can't allow that, besides the fact that he rested his case. MR. OUBRE: Your Honor, I have affidavits which have been filed with the Court incorporated into --MR. BITGOOD: Here we go. MR. OUBRE: -- supplements several times. Saying from each individual and a representative of the corporations that I have the authority to represent them in this case.

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MS. NORMAN: Your Honor, I have to make a hearsay objection. The affidavits are hearsay. He cannot sponsor someone else's words -- even though they may be filed in Court -- if the person is not here to sponsor their own affidavit. If he had his own affidavit, for some reason, he might be able to sponsor it but it is hearsay and I object under hearsay on behalf of Mr. Jones and my other -- the Texas Domestic Partnership, to a hearsay being -attempting to be used as evidence in this case. THE COURT: My issue is -- before I rule on your objection -- is that you rested and that is the only 12 issue I am having. 13 MR. OUBRE: Well, Your Honor, my response 14 with the evidence was already before the Court. 15 THE COURT: No, it was not. You never asked 16 me to take judicial notice. You never asked me to do any of 17 that. MR. OUBRE: Your Honor, I filed a response 19 with the Court incorporating the affidavits and attaching 20 them. THE COURT: And I am sure Mr. Easton is going 2.2 to say he objects to the affidavits. 23 MR. BITGOOD: If I may, Your Honor? I think we finally found what you have been looking for. 25 American Fire and Insurance Company v. Jones

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reported at 828 S.W.2d 767 -- we are about to hand you up the case. To answer what he just told you, instruments attached to pleadings are not evidence. Unless, they have been formally introduced, marked and admitted -- give him the case. Judge, wait till we give you the case before you run out. (Bailiff complies) MR. BITGOOD: American Fire, that would be number one of the new table. Number one, American Fire and Insurance Company v. Jones. He can attach everything he wants but it is not evidence of anything. If that was the case the Court would never have to conduct a trial it could just look at the pleadings. THE COURT: I am aware of that. MR. BITGOOD: Thank you, sir. THE COURT: Let's take a 2 minute break. (Break taken) THE COURT: We are back on the record. What I would like both parties to do just so that I can have a clear record, I am going to allow you to make your statement again. Although, you did rest I want you to make your statement clear for the record. And Mr. Easton, you can make your argument clear for the record as well. Both parties. And I want you to -- when you make your argument about the Rule 12 I want you to make your

1 arguments about as far as he -- Mr. Oubre, correct -- has 2 authority to represent them based on the affidavits. I also 3 want you to touch base on the Secretary of State, as well as 4 when that was filed. 5 MR. BITGOOD: With that being said, Your 6 Honor, we can take care of a few housekeeping matters now, 7 that he didn't do and I will do it for him. 8 I'd ask the Court to take judicial notice of 9 certain things. Would the Court do so providing they are 10 within the law? 11 THE COURT: Yes. 12 MR. BITGOOD: I will ask the Court to take 1.3 judicial notice of the court's file at this time. 14 THE COURT: I take judicial notice of the 15 court's file. 16 MR. BITGOOD: I'd ask the Court to take 17 judicial notice of Chapter 27 of The Civil Practice and 18 Remedies Code. 19 THE COURT: So noted. 20 MR. BITGOOD: I would ask the Court to take 21 judicial notice of the Texas Penal Code 42.07, which is the 2.2 law. 23 THE COURT: So noted. 24 MR. BITGOOD: Texas Penal Code 37.10. Texas 25 Business and Commerce Code, Section 71.202. Yes? Wait a

1	minute, I have to hand you a copy of it. Susan, take this
2	up there.
3	(Complies)
4	THE COURT: So noted.
5	MR. BITGOOD: My apologies, Judge. There it
6	is in writing, exactly what you are looking at. I gave a
7	copy to opposing Counsel.
8	Texas Business and Commerce Code Section
9	71.203.
10	THE COURT: So noted.
11	MR. BITGOOD: Texas Penal Code 37.02.
12	THE COURT: So noted.
13	MR. BITGOOD: Texas Penal Code 36.08.
14	THE COURT: So noted.
15	MR. BITGOOD: Texas Penal Code 15.02.
16	THE COURT: So noted.
17	MR. BITGOOD: Texas Penal Code 39.03.
18	THE COURT: So noted.
19	MR. BITGOOD: Texas Penal Code 39.06.
20	THE COURT: So noted.
21	MR. BITGOOD: The Texas State Bar Rules of
22	Professional Conduct.
23	THE COURT: That is noted as well.
24	MR. BITGOOD: Rule 13 of the Texas Rules of
25	Civil Procedure.

1	THE COURT: So noted.
2	MR. BITGOOD: Chapter 10 of the Texas Civil
3	Practice and Remedies Code.
4	THE COURT: So noted.
5	MR. BITGOOD: Chapter 11 of The Texas Civil
6	Practice and Remedies Code.
7	THE COURT: So noted.
8	MR. BITGOOD: The Texas Rules of Evidence.
9	THE COURT: So noted.
10	MR. BITGOOD: 15 United States Code 116, The
11	Cares Act.
12	THE COURT: So noted.
13	MR. BITGOOD: Texas Rule of Civil Procedure
14	11 Agreement in file the court's file dated April 26th
15	between the parties.
16	THE COURT: Okay, so noted.
17	MR. BITGOOD: And 21 Texas Penal Code 7.02.
18	Hand him the order, please.
19	THE COURT: Now, going back to what I
20	instructed.
21	Mr. Oubre, regarding the Rule 12 you are
22	stating that the affidavits are sufficient?
23	MR. OUBRE: Yes, Your Honor, and my
24	understanding is the Court he asked you to take judicial
25	notice of the court's file and that was accepted. I would

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     note that part of the court's file in the response that I
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     filed to this motion was a Supplemental Response to Motion
 3
     to Show Authority was Exhibit A, the affidavit of Karina
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    Martinez showing you I have authority -- we have authority
 5
     to represent her in this suit. Exhibit B, the affidavit
 6
     from Karina Martinez saying that I have -- David Oubre has
 7
     the authority to represent her in the lawsuit. Exhibit C,
 8
     the affidavit of Marianna Sullivan indicating that myself
 9
     and my law firm have authority to represent her in this case
10
     and that we are her attorneys. The affidavit of Thomas
11
     Larson who is Outside General Counsel for NRES Holdings,
12
     that was attached as Exhibit D. His job duties for an NRES
13
    Management includes management of legal matters for Imperial
14
     Lofts, LLC --
15
                    MR. BITGOOD: Your Honor, I object him
16
     reading from the affidavit.
17
                    MR. OUBRE: Imperial Lofts, LLC. That is --
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                    MR. BITGOOD: Hold up. Hold up, let him
19
     rule.
20
                    THE COURT: Are you reading from the
21
     affidavit?
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                    MR. OUBRE: Yes, Your Honor.
23
                    THE COURT: Okay. That objection will be
24
     sustained.
25
                                The affidavit of Thomas Larson
                    MR. OUBRE:
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which was part of the court's file, which the Court
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 2
     indicated that judicial notice has been taken is attached as
 3
     Exhibit D. I have also attached as Exhibit E a certified
 4
     copy of the application of Lewis Brisbois Bisgaard & Smith
 5
     dated March 9, 2021. And an application attached as
 6
     Defendant's Exhibit F dated March 28, 2022 which indicates
 7
     that it was effective on filing and that is dated March 28,
 8
     2022.
 9
                    THE COURT: All right. When was the
10
     expiration date?
11
                    MS. NORMAN: March 9th --
12
                    MR. BITGOOD: March 9, 20 -- I'm sorry.
13
                    MR. OUBRE: March 9, 2022.
14
                    And, Your Honor, on March 28th I've already
15
     filed -- to that Exhibit, which was attached as Exhibit F.
16
     And then, Exhibit G was a Proof of Payment for the
17
     Application for Registration.
18
                    THE COURT: So --
19
                    MR. OUBRE: I attached as Exhibit H --
20
                    THE COURT: Mr. Oubre --
21
                    MR. OUBRE: -- what happened was we filled on
22
    March 28, 2022, the Application for Registration for Limited
23
     Liabilty Partnership and Mr. Bitgood filed --
24
                    THE COURT: Before we get into that, Mr.
25
     Oubre, it expired on March the 9th, 2022?
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1	MR. OUBRE: Yes.
2	THE COURT: Okay. And you renewed it on
3	March 28th?
4	MR. OUBRE: Yes.
5	THE COURT: Okay.
6	MR. OUBRE: Yes, Your Honor, and I requested
7	the Amended Answers were filed on behalf of my clients
8	last week and that is part of the court's file. And I
9	requested the Court has taken judicial notice of those
10	Amended Answers, it is my understanding, from him moving for
11	the entire file.
12	THE COURT: Okay. Mr. Easton, you can
13	respond.
14	MR. BITGOOD: I got something easier for
15	MR. OUBRE: And, Your Honor, I would also
16	like to lodge an objection to the Declaration of Custodian.
17	The Motion to Show Authority, Mr. Bitgood filed
18	MR. BITGOOD: He rested his case, Your Honor,
19	and now he is object
20	MR. OUBRE: Your Honor.
21	MR. BITGOOD: Objection, Your Honor, he
22	rested his case.
23	THE COURT: Okay
24	MR. OUBRE: I am going to object to the
25	affidavit that was attached, the Declaration of Custodian.

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First of all, I would object to the exhibits attached to Plaintiff's reply to Amended Response to Defendant's Motion to Show Authority. There is a Declaration of Custodian filed by Mr. Bitgood AKA Michael Easton. It is not notarized at all. There are several documents which I would object to -- attached to Exhibit A, the Declaration of Custodian. In that Declaration, he refers to Exhibit A; applications before Liability Partnership Correspondence and there are screenshots from websites. I would object to all of those exhibits as -- under Exhibit A, as hearsay. There is no affidavit proving those up. There is no affidavit from anyone. It is simply Mr. Bitgood having an unsworn Declaration and indicating that these are correct copies maintained by the Secretary of State when he is obviously not the custodian of Secretary of State. They are not certified. THE COURT: Okay. I understand that, Mr. Oubre. Let me just ask you a question. Do you want me to take judicial notice of the court's file or do you not? MR. OUBRE: I do want you to take judicial notice of the court's file but I do have an objection to that exhibit. THE COURT: Well, if you -- did you raise that objection when you agreed to the judicial notice of the

court's file? Because if you don't want me to take judicial 1 2 notice of the court's file then your affidavits they don't 3 come in. Do you understand that? 4 MR. OUBRE: Your Honor, I am asking the Court 5 to take judicial notice of the court's file. I am saying I 6 just have an objection to the evidence that was submitted. 7 THE COURT: The Court has already taken 8 judicial notice of the court's file. What I am telling you 9 is that, what would have been proper, is in the beginning 10 when you made your arguments you would have said, can the 11 Court take judicial notice of the court's file. And then, I 12 would have had to -- I would have taken judicial notice of 13 the court's file based on his objection or another objection 14 or not, right. I think now what you are asking me to do is 15 to just take judicial notice of certain parts of the court's 16 file. 17 MR. OUBRE: Your Honor, I am asking the Court 18 to take judicial notice of the court's file including the 19 Amended Answer that I have on file, which is before the 20 Court. 21 THE COURT: Okay. 22 MR. OUBRE: I am just saying, I have a 23 hearsay objection to this Declaration of Custodian and the 24 exhibits that were attached. It is hearsay, it is not even 25 an affidavit.

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                    MR. BITGOOD: Your Honor, you had it correct.
 2
     The time for him to have requested it, before I requested
 3
     it, was before he rested. That was crucial to his case.
 4
     Now, I hope the Court doesn't think my old age I going to
 5
     cut my throat by asking you to take judicial notice of
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     something that is going to kill me. So the case is called
 7
     Tschirhart v. Tschirhart 876 -- it is number 42 Susan -- 876
 8
     S.W.2nd 507. And the case holds, the Court may take
 9
     judicial notice of a pleading in the court's file but it can
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     never take judicial notice of the truth of the matter
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     asserting. And that is exactly what he is asking you to do,
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    he can't do it.
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                    MR. OUBRE: Your Honor, is my objection
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     sustained or overruled?
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                    THE COURT: As far as --
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                    MR. OUBRE: His Declaration of Custodian,
17
     attached as Exhibit A to his Plaintiff's --
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                    MR. BITGOOD: Should have put it in writing.
19
                    MR. OUBRE: -- reply to the Amended, Amended
20
     Response to Defendant's Motion to Show Authority.
21
                    THE COURT: Okay, your response to that?
2.2
     Just -- he is objecting to just one part of the Declaration,
23
     I guess the Declaration. Correct?
24
                    MR. OUBRE: Yes.
25
                    MR. BITGOOD: Your Honor.
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MR. BEERS: Judge, I guess -- I don't want to get -- I know I am next on the SLAPP Motion but I don't want this record to look like it is confused or muddled as to the distinction between the Court taking judicial notice of some piece of paper being in the file, as opposed to that piece of a paper being evidence in a hearing. Mr. Oubre rested and now he is making objections to things.

When my SLAPP Motion is heard there is an affidavit attached to my SLAPP -- Declaration attached to my SLAPP Motions are to be determined. Like Motions for Summary Judgment, where you file an affidavit or things attached to the motion -- which is very distinctive

So I don't want this record to look like oh, wait, we were equating taking judicial notice as being evidence in a hearing versus a 166a Motion for Summary Judgment type hearing.

from a Rule 12 Motion, that requires the Court to receive

evidence. Somebody puts an exhibit sticker on something and

gives it to the Court, somebody gets on the witness stand or

raises their right hand and swears to tell the truth.

THE COURT: And I would agree. I guess the problem I am having -- and maybe, Mr. Oubre, you can help me with it. The issue I am having is since we have Covid issues the affidavit has been given a little bit more credibility, okay. But again, you never -- you rested. So

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technically, those affidavits are not into -- in evidence.
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     So -- but if we allow Mr. Easton, you know, judicial notice
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     then we can let those, you know, affidavits come into
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     evidence, correct?
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                    MS. NORMAN: No, sir.
 6
                    MR. BITGOOD: No, sir.
 7
                    THE COURT: No, no. I asked Mr. Oubre.
 8
                    MS. NORMAN: I'm sorry.
 9
                    MR. BITGOOD: We apologize.
10
                    THE COURT: Okay.
11
                    MR. BITGOOD: We are going to shut our mouth.
12
                    THE COURT: I asked Mr. Oubre to respond to
13
     this. So they would come in. Correct?
14
                    MR. OUBRE: Your Honor has already taken
15
     judicial notice. I filed a response to this motion and
16
     attached as evidence affidavits from my clients.
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                    THE COURT: But --
18
                    MR. OUBRE: That is evidence in my authority.
19
                    THE COURT: So what you are saying is that
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     anything that I take judicial notice of is considered
2.1
     evidence?
2.2
                    MR. OUBRE: I -- Your Honor, I am saying that
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     I have filed a response.
24
                    THE COURT: That is not what I asked you, Mr.
25
     Oubre.
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MR. OUBRE: Your Honor, you are taking judicial notice of the entire file. I am just saying I have an objection to this portion of the motion. THE COURT: I'm not even talking about the motion right now. What I am saying to you is that when I take judicial notice are you saying to the Court that, that is evidence? That everything that I take judicial notice of is considered evidence? MR. OUBRE: Yes. MS. NORMAN: May I approach? THE COURT: You may respond now. MR. BITGOOD: To your what? Question? THE COURT: You may respond. MR. BITGOOD: Your Honor, Tschirhart says if it was evidence we would never need a trial, we would never have to come down here, we would never need to impanel jurors because you can just take judicial notice and pick what side you like the most and render a judgment. It is never evidence. He has to put on evidence. He had his opportunity. He rested without putting on evidence. Now, I can help him out for November the 10th if you let me -- if you let me. THE COURT: Okay. Go ahead, you may proceed. MR. BITGOOD: Yes, Your Honor. I would like to be sworn first, please, from where I sit.

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Will you please raise your right THE COURT: hand? Do you solemnly swear or affirm the testimony you are about to give will be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth so help you God? MR. BITGOOD: I do. Your Honor, I am going to offer BE1 through 16 as evidence -- and that is the list. I am handing Counsel a copy of that list and that is for the court reporter and I move to admit BE1 through 16 into evidence for the purpose of this hearing and any subsequent hearing. BE, Your Honor, stands for Bitgood Easton just so that there is no confusion. THE COURT: Before I -- I am going to ask for any objection but before I rule I want to finish the Rule 12. MR. BITGOOD: That will -- okay, but I still offer them. THE COURT: Any objection? MR. OUBRE: Yes, Your Honor, I haven't even seen exactly what has been attached. MR. BITGOOD: Hand it to him. Susan, hand it to him. THE COURT: You can get that. I will allow a few more minutes until Mr. Oubre sees them but let's take up the Rule 12 before I make my decision.

1 Mr. Oubre, let me ask you a question 2 regarding the Rule 12. Do you have witnesses that you can 3 get here? 4 MR. OUBRE: Today? 5 THE COURT: Yes, today. 6 MR. OUBRE: No. 7 THE COURT: Okay. 8 I am going to grant the Rule 12. 9 MR. BITGOOD: Thank you. 10 MR. OUBRE: And, Your Honor, for the purposes 11 of them drafting the order can I request exactly what the 12 basis --13 MR. BITGOOD: Hold on. Hold on, give him the 14 Wait, wait, wait. He is right. I need to give -order. 15 show him. And I filled in the date for the next hearing. 16 THE COURT: I am -- let me just say this for 17 your record. I am going to say this for the record so you 18 can have it. Even if I say that you put on evidence with 19 the affidavits, okay, they were never admitted into 20 evidence. Anything he filed from the date that it was 21 expired would be gone anyway. You understand that, right? 2.2 You know that, because that is why you filed the Answers --23 the Amended Answer. So I quess that is part of the issue 24 and I will let you have that for the record. Normally, I 25 wouldn't say anything.

1 MR. OUBRE: Your Honor, can I at least 2 request that this case be abated pending appeal of this 3 issue? 4 MR. BITGOOD: I will respond to that. 5 THE COURT: You can. 6 MR. OUBRE: He is not entitled to an 7 interlocutory appeal on this issue, okay. If he wants to 8 abate the case as he told me -- no, I promised not to do 9 that to him. We are not going to push each other about what 10 we spoke on the phone -- this is the law. He wants to go to 11 mediation October 4th. This is why I didn't want to pass 12 this hearing. The gentleman needs some positive 13 reinforcement because every time we've tried to make a deal 14 with him we have been pranked, badly pranked. So I don't 15 want anymore pranks. If he is serious about settling he can 16 show up at that mediation take care of what was mine 17 minimal, minimal -- I mean I was under \$20,000 including 18 attorney fees until they pranked -- and take care of this 19 gentleman back here named Richard P. Jones for what they did 20 to him. And I haven't had a chance to tell this Court exactly what they did to him. But he keeps telling me he 21 2.2 doesn't understand this case. This case is really simple. 23 He don't have a defense. They had no standing and they 24 moved to evict 12 black tenants from the apartment complex 25 without standing, and I caught them and they came after me.

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And while this was going on, this 21 day prank, his client was on the phone trying to get me indicted. Calling the office of the District Attorney alleging, among other things, that there was a conspiracy --(Interruption) MR. BITGOOD: Oh! That is Mr. Healy. Let him in. (Bailiff complies) MR. BITGOOD: -- that there was a conspiracy between John Healy, Brian Middleton and Michael Easton. Not to prosecute Michael Easton. MR. OUBRE: Let --MR. BITGOOD: Let me finish there, Counsel. All these things were going on while we were supposed to be in settlement talks. There was no legitimate settlement. Now, today's ruling puts him behind the 8 ball. He has to go to mediation in good faith. Which is what I am glad we did today. He can settle this. The next set of orders you see -- Motion to Vacate all Previous Orders and Dismiss the Case with Prejudice. It is a win-win for everybody with dignity and with honor. Because I was retired, Judge Lewis, retired. Until this man called me begging me to help him. And I said, I don't have time for this. He said Michael, they are going to nail me. And as I went down that list of tenants I noticed something that was

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     very distinct, they all happened to be one race. And that
 2
     ain't right, by anybody's stretch of the imagination.
 3
     if his client ever went before a jury, ever, I would hate to
 4
     think what a jury is going to do to his client. So this is
 5
     in his best interest -- to pay the pennies on the dollars
 6
    we've asked for and get rid of this case. So I can go back
 7
     to retirement and running around Houston with my friend,
 8
     John Healy, trying out different restaurants every week --
 9
     that is what I really want to be doing. And writing, sir.
10
                    Now, the Court has made it's ruling and all
11
     we ask is that you sign the order. But that is what this
12
     case was about, Judge.
13
                    THE COURT: Mr. Oubre?
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                    MR. OUBRE: Well, Your Honor, I object to the
15
     order. Striking the pleadings --
16
                    MS. NORMAN: It is required.
17
                    MR. OUBRE: -- of the Defendant's in entering
18
     the Default --
19
                    MR. BITGOOD: It has to.
20
                    THE COURT: The Default part is not -- I
21
    haven't seen the order but the Default part -- I have to
2.2
     Strike the Pleadings, okay. That is required.
23
                    MR. OUBRE: Your Honor, there are Amended
24
     Answers on file that --
25
                    MR. BITGOOD: Makes no --
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1	MR. OUBRE: are before the Court.
2	MR. BITGOOD: Judge.
3	THE COURT: Hold on.
4	MR. BITGOOD: Okay.
5	THE COURT: I have made my decision, okay.
6	So we can move on.
7	MR. OUBRE: Well, Your Honor, if that is the
8	Courts ruling I can't go forward with any other hearings
9	today.
10	MR. BITGOOD: That is correct.
11	Hand him the order.
12	MR. OUBRE: I object to the entry of the
13	order with regard to Striking the Pleadings and entering a
14	Default Judgment.
15	THE COURT: I am not going to enter a Default
16	Judgment.
17	MR. OUBRE: Okay.
18	MR. BITGOOD: Can you interlineate the word
19	"Default" then?
20	THE COURT: I am not going to enter a Default
21	Judgment. I am going to Strike the Pleadings because I have
22	no choice. It says, "I shall." So I have to Strike the
23	Pleadings but I am not going to enter a Default Judgment.
24	MR. BITGOOD: Your Honor, would you like the
25	case or you have already made your ruling on that?

1 THE COURT: I have already made my ruling. 2 MR. BITGOOD: Thank you, sir. 3 THE COURT: Thank you. 4 MR. BITGOOD: Now, Judge, Mr. Beers motion is 5 what is left and he can't say a word. 6 MR. OUBRE: Your Honor, I'm going to -- can I 7 at least request a continuance of any additional motions? 8 In light of the fact that you have ruled that my clients 9 have lost their lawyers and they -- I think they are 10 entitled to have representation in this case. 11 MR. BITGOOD: There is a school of thought 12 that goes with this, Judge. When you are given a hundred 13 warnings it is not my job nor this poor lady's job or Mr. 14 Jones' job nor mine to do his work. He had enough advance 15 notice. I sent him case sites, if you will look them up. 16 THE COURT: Mr. Oubre is correct. His 17 clients do not have representation at this time. So you are correct in that. So I cannot move forward because they 18 19 don't have representation. 20 MR. BITGOOD: If that is your feeling --21 THE COURT: That is the thing about doing the 2.2 Rule 12 first. 23 MR. BITGOOD: Okay. If the Court will sign 24 the order, interlineate the Default, we will go to 25 mediation. If mediation doesn't settle then we will be

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1
    back.
 2
                    THE COURT: Then you come back, yes.
 3
                    MR. BITGOOD: November 10th at 1:30 is what
 4
     the order says.
 5
                    THE COURT: Yes.
 6
                    MR. BITGOOD: Good. Okay, David.
 7
                    THE COURT: We are off the record.
 8
       (Whereupon, thereafter the proceedings for the
 9
       above-referenced case this date were concluded.)
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THE STATE OF TEXAS )
 1
 2
     COUNTY OF FORT BEND )
 3
         I, ASHLEY AVILA, Official Court Reporter in and
 4
     and for County Court #3, Fort Bend County, State of
 5
     Texas, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing
 6
     contains a true and correct transcription of all
 7
     portions of evidence and other proceedings requested in
 8
     writing by counsel for the parties to be included
     in this volume of the Reporter's Record, in the
 9
10
     above-styled and numbered cause, all of which occurred
11
     in open Court or video telephonically and were
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     reported by me. I further certify that this Reporter's
1.3
     Record of the proceedings truly and correctly reflect
14
     the exhibits, if any, offered by the respective parties.
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          I, further, certify that the total cost for
16
     preparation of this Reporter's Record is $308 and is
17
     due and owing by DAVID OUBRE.
18
          WITNESS MY OFFICIAL HAND this 13th day of
19
     September, 2022.
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                                          /s/Ashley Avila
                                        ASHLEY AVILA, CSR
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                                        TEXAS CSR # 11807
                                 OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER
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                                 COUNTY COURT OF LAW # 3
                                   RICHMOND, TEXAS 77469
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